

PUBLIC NOTICE

United States District Court, District of Idaho • James A. McClure Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
550 West Fort Street • Boise, Idaho •

For Immediate Release

Date: August 17, 2007
Contact: B. Lynn Winmill, Chief District Judge
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Subject: Public Service by Idaho's Magistrate Judges

The Idaho federal judiciary will soon be experiencing a historic transition when two of its trial judges retire in 2008 from full-time service. Since Idaho became a state in 1890, only a handful of federal judges have been appointed to the bench, and it is without precedence that two vacancies will occur in such a close period of time. Changes to the composition of the federal bench have usually occurred with the passing of a judge, when one takes senior status, or upon the rare approval of a new judgeship position by Congress.

For more than sixty years after statehood was attained, Idaho had only one United States District Judge. It was not until 1954 that Congress approved the addition of a second federal judge. Then, in 1984 a new judicial position for Idaho, that of United States Magistrate Judge was authorized. In 1992, a second Magistrate Judge position for Idaho was authorized due to increasing case filings. In total, not counting Idaho's four Bankruptcy Judges who have served or are now serving, since 1890 there have been only 13 federal court trial judges, consisting of eleven District Judges including Edward J. Lodge and myself, and two Magistrate Judges, Mikel H. Williams and Larry M. Boyle.

With the decision of Judges Williams and Boyle to retire next year, two additional federal judges will be appointed to succeed them and the process to select their successors is already well under way. As prescribed by federal law, a Merit Selection Panel will be appointed to screen and recommend individuals to succeed Judges Boyle and Williams. Boise attorney Robert Hamlin has been appointed to chair that panel and a statewide survey of the applicants' qualifications will be conducted. Mr. Hamlin has served as the Executive Director of the Idaho Judicial Council for more than 20 years and has directed the work of the Council as it has screened applicants and submitted recommendations to the Governor for all Idaho Supreme Court, Idaho Court of Appeals and District Court positions filled during that 20-year period. Utilizing this approach, we will have the benefit of both the federal guidelines procedures and the Idaho state system in selecting Idaho's two new federal judges.

The retirement of Judges Boyle and Williams in 2008, and the appointment of two new federal judges to succeed them will be a historic and watershed event of significant importance for Idaho's federal courts. It does not mean, however, the District of Idaho will lose the benefit of their services as judicial officers or be without the benefit of their vast reservoir of experience, ability, and legal talent as it is anticipated that both will serve on recall. Between them, at the time of their

retirements, Judges Williams and Boyle will have more than 40 years of combined judicial experience at the trial and appellate levels of the state and federal judiciaries.

Before accepting his appointment as a federal judge in 1984, Judge Williams served as a Judge Advocate General officer and military judge on active duty and thereafter in the Army Reserve attaining the rank of Lt. Colonel. He also was a highly respected Department of Justice federal prosecutor with the United States Attorneys Office in Boise prior to entering into a successful private practice where he was at the time of his appointment to the federal bench.

Prior to accepting his appointment as a federal judge in 1992, Judge Boyle was one of Idaho's finest civil trial attorneys, a former state district judge, and an Associate Justice of the Idaho Supreme Court. He also served, at the request of William H. Rehnquist, then Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, an unprecedented three terms between 1998 and 2006 on a national federal court committee that approved requests for creating new federal judgeships.

In addition to Judges Williams and Boyle handling a substantial percentage of the civil cases filed in the District of Idaho, presiding over court and jury trials, working extensively with litigants and their lawyers in judicially supervised mediations and settlement conferences, and participating in every aspect of court governance, each of them have served as the Chief Magistrate Judge for the District of Idaho and both have served the federal judiciary on both Ninth Circuit and United States Judicial Conference committees at the highest levels. Both judges have brought great honor and national recognition to the District of Idaho and each has left an indelible mark of judicial excellence. We anticipate that their successors will continue that standard.

The continuing service of these two judges on recall service after their retirements, along with the addition of the two new federal judges who succeed them, is truly a win-win for the District of Idaho. As a result, the citizens of Idaho and the members of the legal profession who represent their clients in federal court will have additional judicial resources available to serve their needs.

Hon. B. Lynn Winmill
Chief District Judge
United States District Court for the District of Idaho